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1995/08/01

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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ROK PEACE INITIATIVE

The ROKG plans to announce this new "two-plus-two" peace initiative in a speech by President Kim on August 15 (Liberation Day).

CHINESE ALIEN SMUGGLING SHIP

On July 5, the Coast Guard interdicted the "Jung Sheng Number 8", a Panamanian flag vessel engaged in attempting to smuggle 147 illegal Chinese immigrants to the United States. In contradiction of past practice and previous understandings, the Chinese informed us the migrants could not be repatriated from a third country with arrangements made by the International Organization for Migration. Instead, the migrants would have to be returned from U.S. territory by the United States. As a result of this demand and deteriorating conditions aboard the vessel, the migrants have been taken to Wake Island. Given the presence of 92 minors aboard, it is imperative the Chinese quickly approve the return of the migrants to China.

(IF TIME PERMITS:) ARF and NEASED

While China shares our desire to participate in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and to develop a parallel Northeast Asia Security Dialogue (NEASED), its approach has been cautious.

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Over the past year, China's attitude toward NEASED has become more positive, as reflected in Beijing's decision to host the next mixed NEASED conference in Beijing early next year -- a decision which we have welcomed. We believe our special effort to consult with China on these multilateral fora has contributed to Beijing's more positive attitude toward them and facilitated the process of reaching the type of mutually acceptable outcomes which will keep China constructively engaged in these new fora.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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PRESS STATEMENT

I welcome the opportunity to meet again with Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen (phonetic: Cheeyen Chee-chun).

As I noted in a speech last week, no country is poised to play a larger role in helping shape the future of the Asia-Pacific region than China. It is therefore fitting that the occasion of our meeting is the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

Today's meeting with Vice Premier Qian is our ninth bilateral meeting. I have come to value Vice Premier Qian's knowledge and candor and, as in the past, I look forward to frank and useful discussions today with the Vice Premier.

(Note: The first bilateral between the Secretary and Qian was in July 1993. The President initiated the comprehensive engagement strategy with China in September 1993, and at the end of that month the Secretary had his second bilateral meeting with Qian.)

The focus of our meeting today is U.S.-China relations. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our firm commitment to a one-China policy and the three U.S.-PRC Joint Communiques, which include the following elements:

- The Government of the United States recognizes the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China;

We believe that only the people in the People's Republic of China and Taiwan can determine their future relationship. The abiding interest of the United States is that any resolution of their differences be peaceful.

I want to note that the United States is very concerned about the arrest of American citizen Harry Wu. Without getting into the specifics of the charges for which he is under investigation by Chinese authorities, we urge that Mr. Wu be released as soon as possible. It is, of course, China's decision to make, but this case needs to be resolved expeditiously if we are to avoid further damage to the bilateral relationship between our two countries.

As two great powers with very different political, economic, and social systems, our two countries will inevitably have differences, some of them sharp. President Clinton's strategy of comprehensive engagement with China is essential to addressing those differences while expanding our cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

China and the United States share a common goal in preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems and thus enhancing global stability and peace. We therefore particularly regret China's decision to suspend dialogue on non-proliferation and other arms control matters. We believe it is in the national interest of both the United States and China to maintain an intensive dialogue on these and other critical issues. The United States looks forward to a resumption of these discussions in seeking a more stable and peaceful world.

It is also important that the United States and China continue our dialogue on the many economic issues before us. I want to reiterate that the United States continues to staunchly support China's accession to the World Trade Organization on commercially meaningful grounds.

I believe there is great potential in the relationship between our two countries. I look forward to a meeting today that will help bring us closer to realizing this potential.

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EXCISE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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